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### **College Readiness Fairs To Promote Academic Preparation**

The final installment of a series of statewide college and career readiness fairs for 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders will be held tomorrow.

The college fair is scheduled at McNeese State University in Lake Charles from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Interested students and parents may contact the McNeese Office of Enrollment Information at (337) 475-5504 or (800) 622-3352 (ext.5504) for more information.

The informational fairs are one important way Louisiana's postsecondary institutions and the Board of Regents are working to ensure that Louisiana high school students are aware of and will be academically prepared to meet the state's new, more stringent admission standards for public four-year universities. The new standards are scheduled for full implementation by the fall of 2005.

Representatives from public, four-year universities *statewide* will be on hand at the event to answer students' questions about their specific institutions. In addition to the opportunity for interaction with campus representatives, students will also receive valuable information on topics such as the new four-year admission standards, the TOPS program and other tuition assistance, and how to select and apply to a college or university.

The armed services, the Louisiana Department of Labor and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System will also be represented at the fair, for students who may not be planning to enter a four-year institution after high school.

"These programs are designed to reach students at the beginning of their high school careers and provide information that will be beneficial to them in their college preparatory process," said Joe Cruse, Associate Director of Freshman Admissions at the University of New Orleans and chair of the statewide Recruiting Services Committee, which has coordinated the fairs.

"Our goal is to drive home to our students across the state that the junior year of high school is not the time to begin thinking about college, particularly if they plan to attend a four-year university," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joe Savoie. "We've got a lot of bright students in this state who deserve the chance to pursue a college education. These fairs are all about enhancing access to our postsecondary education system by informing students and parents during the early high school years about the quality educational opportunities available in

## **College Readiness Fairs**

### **ADD ONE**

Louisiana after high school graduation.”

With the McNeese event, ten institutions will have conducted freshman fairs throughout the state this summer, attracting hundreds of middle and high school students. In addition to promoting the informational fairs, the Commissioner of Higher Education sent letters to the parents of eighth and ninth graders throughout the state informing them of the new admissions standards and encouraging the students to remain in Louisiana after high school graduation.

“We are working with all of the information sources for these students, teachers, principals, counselors and parents to spread the word about the importance of sound academic preparation in reaching career goals. As a parent myself, I thought it was important that we write directly to the mothers and fathers in this state to invite their sons and daughters to take a look at the quality educational offerings at Louisiana’s colleges and universities.”

The Board of Regents and individual campuses plan to continue this outreach campaign to ensure that students and parents are fully aware of the new 2005 admissions requirements.